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RELEASED IN PART  
B1, 1.4(D)

Brian R Naranjo 12/10/2001 05:29:50 PM From DB/Inbox: Brian R Naranjo

Cable Text:

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TELEGRAM

December 10, 2001

To: SECSTATE WASHDC - ROUTINE  
Action: INR  
From: AMEMBASSY CARACAS (CARACAS 3620 - ROUTINE)  
TAGS: PREL, PGOV, KPAO, VE  
Captions: None  
Subject: NATIONAL WORK STOPPAGE A SUCCESS-   
Ref: None

B1

CLASSIFIED BY CHARGE FREDERICK B. COOK. REASONS 1.5 (B & D).

B1

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VENEZUELA VIRTUALLY SHUT DOWN  
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2. (U) The national work stoppage called by the Federation of Chambers of Commerce (Fedecamaras) and supported by virtually every opposition group in Venezuela was a resounding success. Caracas became practically a ghost town, with businesses of all sizes closed and traffic probably the lightest here since the dawn of the Automobile Age. In the highly commercial Sabana Grande district of the city, even street vendors, ostensibly Chavez allies, took the day off. EconOfis reported a similar lack of business activity in the cities of Maracaibo, Barcelona, and Puerto La Cruz, and television news confirmed the same in other regional capitals. A few small, pro-Chavez demonstrations were greeted with clanging pots and pans--"cacerolazos," now the popular symbol of anti-government discontent. Neither violent incidents nor threats to the American community have been reported. At the Embassy, approximately 70 percent of the FSN appeared for work.

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HUGO NOT HAPPY  
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3. (U) President Chavez made two major addresses today in Caracas condemning the work stoppage. At the ceremony for Air Force Day, he announced--not convincingly--that he "was not bothered a bit" by the strike, but then went on to state that the day was coming when he will "tighten the screws." Later in a speech to about 10,000 bussed-in supporters in Caracas Plaza, he ranted about those "oligarchs" who convoked the strike, deeming their actions "blackmail" and added, "they had no right to do it." Chavez insisted that he would not negotiate the content of the new laws, the putative objects of Fedecamaras's fury. Among other things, he threatened to speed up passage of the controversial Education Law and a new law to punish

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
REVIEW AUTHORITY: JOHN L MILLS  
DATE/CASE ID: 18 APR 2006 200304421

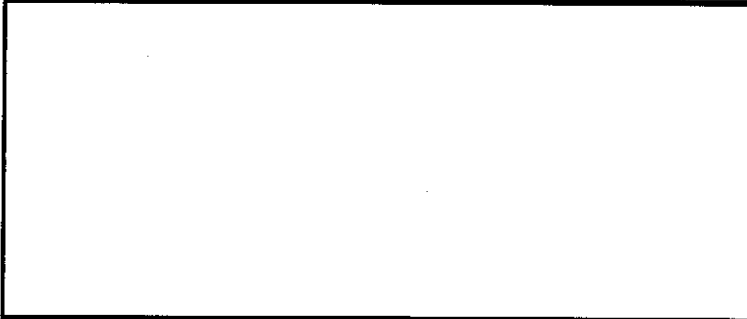
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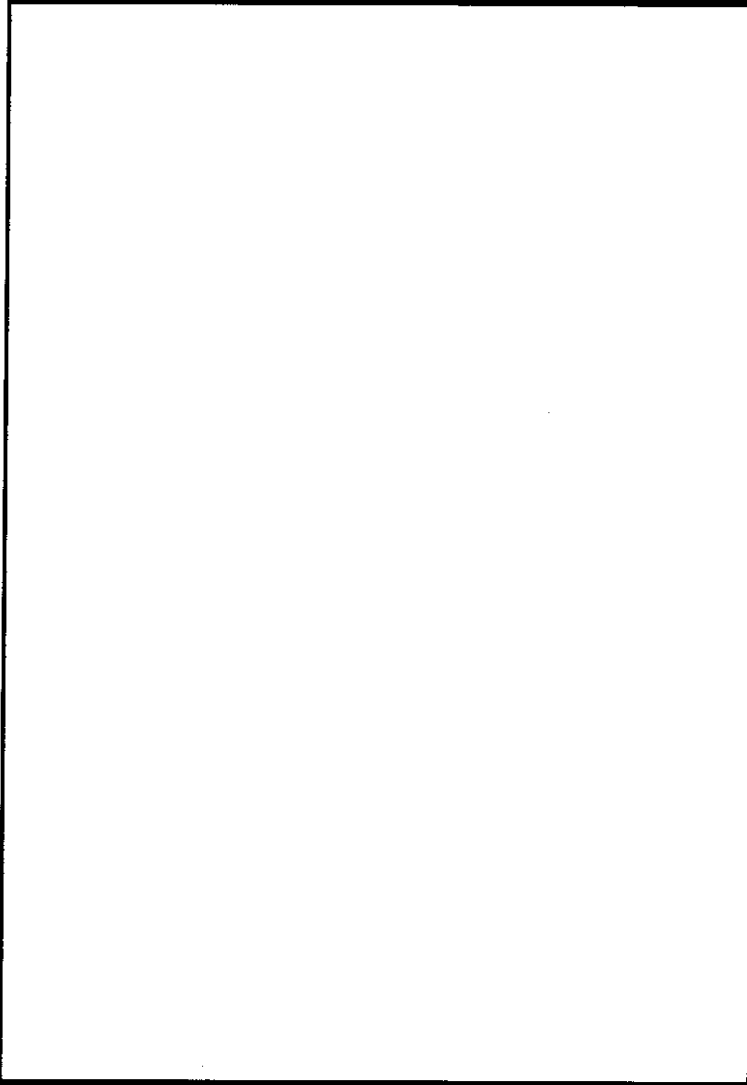
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media outlets for distorting the news.

4. (C) Chavez maintained that today's strike was merely another in a long series of "defeats" for the opposition. If he really believes that the city was not shut down and that the "cacerolazos" were merely people playing compact disks, he is seriously out of touch with political reality.



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Additional Addressees:  
None

cc:

AMEMBASSY BOGOTA  
AMEMBASSY BRASILIA  
AMEMBASSY LA PAZ  
AMEMBASSY LIMA  
AMEMBASSY QUITO  
USINT HAVANA

Distribution:

TED6305  
ACTION INR-00

INFO	LOG-00	NP-00	ACQ-00	DODE-00	WHA-00	DS-00	VC-00
	TEDE-00	VCE-00	AC-01	NSAE-00	ACT-00	IRM-00	USIE-00
	EPAE-00	DSCC-00	DRL-02	NFAT-00	SAS-00	/003W	

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R 102045Z DEC 01  
FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4239  
INFO CIA WASHDC  
DIA WASHDC  
NSC WASHDC  
USCINCSO MIAMI FL  
AMEMBASSY BOGOTA  
AMEMBASSY BRASILIA  
AMEMBASSY LA PAZ  
AMEMBASSY LIMA  
AMEMBASSY QUITO  
USINT HAVANA

C O N F I D E N T I A L CARACAS 003620

INR FOR COZART  
NSC FOR AMBASSADOR MAISTO  
UNCINCSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/10/12  
TAGS: PREL, PGOV, KPAO, VE  
SUBJ: NATIONAL WORK STOPPAGE A SUCCESS-

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End Cable Text

Brian R Naranjo 12/10/2001 05:29:50 PM From DB/inbox: Brian R Naranjo

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